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ABSTRACT

People of African Caribbean heritage make up about 30% of Britain's 3 million people from ethnic minorities, yet there are very few black teachers in the British compulsory education system. Six black teachers and two white teachers in two British city schools were studied to see if there were characteristics associated with black teachers and their relationships with black students. In all, there were 211 children in the study, all between 5 and 11 years of age. The ethnographic study took place over 6 months in the two schools. Early chapters of the book provide a backdrop to the rest. After an introduction, "Black Teachers: An Endangered Species?" Chapter 2, "Research from a Black Perspective," reviews minority perspectives on the underperformance of black students in British and American schools. Chapter 3, "Language and the Curriculum," explores the language of Caribbean heritage children in British schools, and the position of black teachers and students is considered in Chapter 4, "Language, Culture, and the Schooling Process." Chapter 5, "Black Communications: African Retained Language Patterns in Multi-Ethnic Classrooms," describes the teachers' range of retained African verbal and nonverbal communication patterns. Chapter 6, "The Three Rs: Race, Rewards, and Reprimands," focuses on black teachers' uses of praise and blame and the ways in which their regulatory behavior is emancipatory in intent. Chapter 7, "The Intersection of Gender and Ethnicity in Teacher-Pupil Relationships," examines the role of gender in the work of black teachers. Chapter 8, "Conclusion," summarizes the main findings of the research, indicating that there is indeed a black teaching style in British schools. Although this style may be perceived as harsh or disciplinarian by outsiders, many children of African Caribbean heritage find it emancipatory and connect with it culturally. (Contains 229 references.) (SLD)

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